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# Untitled

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Candace Hassan

*Untitled*

On August 29, 2005 a devastating category five hurricane swept through the Gulf Coast states, leaving the city of New Orleans in ruins. This storm forced my family and me to relocate to Humble, Texas, where I was separated from my friends and distanced from many of my family members. This was a very confusing time for a seven-year-old, who had just been torn away from the only life she knew. Settling into a new neighborhood and being known as the "girl from New Orleans" put in me many isolating situations. It was a challenge to make friends and show who I really was.

I had to learn to keep my mind open and my thoughts positive. Although I was alone most of the time, I wouldn't let that get me down. I woke up every day looking for ways to get out of my comfort zone. I wanted to show everyone that I was just like them, and that, although I may not have been from Humble, this was my new home. After a few weeks of being myself, I managed to make friends, stand out academically, and love my new town. I never would've thought that having my life flipped upside down would've given me so much confidence and the ability to look for light in the worst situations.

It's unfortunate to say that today, under the Trump administration, many Americans and immigrants are beginning to feel just as I did, like they don't belong. It's not a good feeling to feel like an "outsider," when in actuality, the people being cast out have every right to feel at home. The bigotry shown by those who support his proposed Muslim ban will only fuel Trump to act with more aggression and hate. The separating and outcasting of any certain group of people has never benefitted, and will never benefit, this country. However, in an era of uncertainty and unpredictability, we must all remain positive and hopeful. Just as Trump is being

empowered by hate, there are people across the country being empowered by love. No one is alone in this fight for solidarity and equality.